

REMARKS

In the Office Action of August 6, 2003, claims 1-5, 11-18, 23 and 24 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as assertedly anticipated by Carpenter et al U.S. Patent No. 6,338,723. Claims 6-10 and 19-22 have been indicated to be drawn to patentable subject matter and to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

By the foregoing amendments, the applicant has amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 6, whereby independent claim 1 now represents a rewriting of claim 6 in independent form. Claim 1 should therefore now be in condition for formal allowance.

In conformity to the amendment of claim 1, claim 6 has been canceled and the dependency of claim 7 has been amended to now depend from independent claim 1. Accordingly, all dependent claims from independent claim 1, namely, claims 2-5 and 7-12 should now also be in condition for formal allowance.

Independent claim 13 has similarly been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 19, including intervening dependent claim 18, whereby claim 13 as now amended represents a rewriting of allowable dependent claim 19 in independent form. Independent claim 19 should therefore now be in condition for formal allowance.

In conformity therewith, claims 18 and 19 have been canceled and the dependency of claim 20 has been amended to now depend from claim 13. Accordingly, all dependent claims from independent claim 13, namely, claims 14-17 and 20-24 should now be in condition for formal allowance.

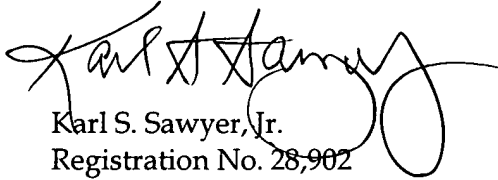
New independent claims 25 and 26 are also submitted herewith. Independent claim 25 represents a rewriting of allowable dependent claim 10 in independent form. Claim 26 represents a rewriting of allowable dependent claim 22 in independent form. Accordingly, independent claims 25 and 26 should also be in condition for formal allowance.

A check in the amount of \$61.00 is submitted herewith in payment of the additional filing fees for the submission of one new independent claim in excess of the three independent claims already paid for, and two new total claims in excess of the twenty-four total claims already paid for.

All of the issues raised in the Office Action having therefore been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable

reconsideration and issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karl S. Sawyer, Jr.", with a large, stylized circular flourish at the end.

Karl S. Sawyer, Jr.

Registration No. 28,902

Kennedy Covington Lobdell & Hickman, LLP

Hearst Tower, 47th Floor

214 North Tryon Street

Charlotte, North Carolina 28202

Telephone (704) 331-7400

-- Attorney for Applicant